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June 23, 2007

Ravalli County Commissioners

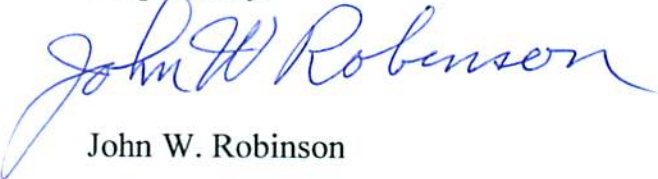
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Commissioner James Rokosch
215 S. 4th Street
Hamilton, MT 59840

Commissioner,

Enclosed is a scenario depicting a problem that is growing ever more serious as the population increases. Something should be done to address this problem.

Respectfully,



John W. Robinson

HELP

We have a problem and we need help. This is the problem.

On the evening of June 14th a pickup pulling a camper trailer up Willow Creek Road, Corvallis passed our house. We did not think much about it because a lot of campers go up in the mountains on weekends. June 15, Friday morning, my son, Bain Robinson, went up to the east end of our property to do some mowing. He discovered the camper trailer abandoned in a clearing on our property, about fifty feet from a private property sign. The door was open, the windows were open and all that was inside were some mattresses.

I called the sheriff and shortly thereafter Deputy Jeff Fowler drove past the house and went up to investigate. On his way out he stopped to visit. The trailer hasn't been registered since 2003 and the last registrant was someone that the sheriff has a warrant for, but they are not able to find him. Deputy Fowler didn't think the trailer was abandoned. He thought it was for a beer bust and they would be back. I agreed to check it to see if they came back. I checked regularly the entire weekend. No one came back.

Deputy Fowler told me if they didn't come back and it was abandoned I should call the county sanitarian and they would haul it away as an abandoned vehicle. On June 18 I called the sanitarian's office. I dialed in to the counties automatic connection system and was given the choice of several numbers to punch. I punched number four, the one that dealt with junk vehicles. I was asked to record a message. I recorded a message and left my phone number. I never received a call back.

June 19, I called the sanitarian's office and to my surprise I was connected to a real person. I explained my problem and the response from the woman appeared to me to be very rude. They wouldn't handle anything without a motor in it and I was left hanging.

On June 21, I called Commissioner Carlotta Grandstaff and left a message explaining my plight. Commissioner Grandstaff returned my call and said she would see what she could do. She called back the next day and told us the county didn't haul trailers but she gave us the number of Pacific Recycling in Missoula who might help.

My wife, Dorothy, called the Pacific Recycling number and they said they didn't think they would be interested. The man was very nice and said he would talk to his boss and see if they could do something. Dorothy asked him how one handled the problem of

having a trailer dumped on them. His suggestion was that most people haul it to an unsuspecting neighbor and dump it. We do not intend to do that.

Pacific Recycling called back on June 22. They would come and look at the trailer next week and see how much it might cost us for them to haul it away. We will pay whatever the cost to have it removed from our property.

Dumping is a real problem. In the past month I have encountered three people attempting to dump trash on our property. Two young men had a truck about half unloaded with debris from some remodeling site, broken windows in frames and that sort of junk. After I spoke to them and explained they were dumping on private property I recommended they load it all up. They did. As they started to leave I told them if they headed up the mountain I was going to call the Forest Service. They headed back to town at a rapid rate.

I encountered another one as he was backing up to a pile of logging scraps preparing to dump his load of yard and tree debris. When I asked him if he intended to dump he swore he was only turning around. He left and headed up the mountain but when he came out he still had the load on.

I have been on the back roads in Southern California and seen the trash that has been dumped destroying a beautiful area. In the forty years we have lived on this ranch we have been diligent in deterring dumpers. With the increase in population the problem has become more severe.

A crime was committed when the dumper left the trailer on our property. I reported it to law enforcement and they made some effort. The county would make no further effort and the problem of handling a severe case of major dumping has fallen back on the individual county taxpayer. The county is really doing nothing or very little to resolve the dumping problem.

We have worked hard to maintain our mountain property and have never failed to pay our taxes. I think that in between meetings to solve the unending problem of zoning, the county should give a serious look at resolving the dumping problem.

If you have any suggestions for a solution send them in to the county and maybe they will take some action to help the taxpaying citizens avoid being criminalized by illegal dumpers. If they don't, the Last Best Place will soon be the Last Trash Place.

John W. Robinson